



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

**CALL FOR PARTNERSHIP CONCEPT PAPERS:
Working with the Private Sector Towards a Prosperous Mali**

UNDER EXISTING

**GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT
APS No: APS-OAA-21-00001**

PLEASE NOTE: This is an addendum to an existing announcement. All interested organizations should carefully review both this addendum AND the full announcement, which can be found here: <https://www.usaid.gov/gda/global-development-alliance-annual-program>. Important information contained in the full worldwide announcement is not repeated in this specific addendum.

This program is authorized in accordance with Part 1 of the Foreign Assistance act of 1961, as amended.

Through this Addendum to the Global Development Alliance (GDA) Annual Program Statement (APS) APS No: APS-OAA-21-00001 (the GDA APS), the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Mission in Mali is making a special call for the submission of Concept Papers focused on catalyzing private sector investment for Mali’s economic recovery through inclusive¹ and sustainable² development.

The specific objectives of this Addendum are to:

- 1) Foster inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led growth
- 2) Catalyze agricultural investments that strengthen resilience among people and systems
- 3) Improve productivity of agricultural market systems to promote a well-nourished population, especially among women and children

¹ Inclusion in this context is defined by Chapter 201 of USAID’s Automated Directives System (ADS), which states “USAID promotes a nondiscriminatory, inclusive, and integrated development approach that ensures that all people, including those who face discrimination and thus may have limited access to a country’s benefits, legal protections, or social participation are fully included and can actively participate in and benefit from development processes and activities”.

² Sustainability in this context is defined as “the likelihood of long-term success of the GDA, which ultimately requires advancing private sector business growth and economic opportunities and/or corporate social responsibility, local ownership, leveraging local resources and expertise, and increasing the ongoing achievement of significant and enduring development results over time”.

- 4) Expand job opportunities and job skills training among priority populations in targeted geographies. (NB: this objective must be paired with at least one of the three above).

Subject to funding availability, USAID/Mali may allocate up to USD \$3,000,000 to fund two or more GDAs with the private sector. Funding for individual applications is anticipated to be in the range of USD \$250,000 to \$1,500,000 to be provided over a period of 2-5 years, depending on the approach of each individual application. The resulting GDAs will complement the [Mali Country plan under the U.S. Government’s Global Food Security Strategy, also known as Feed The Future \(FTF\)](#). If applicant’s prefer to read the [Mali Country Plan in French, please find it here](#).

Priority will be placed on supporting the most promising and effective GDAs, as described in Section III “Evaluation Criteria” below. Effective GDAs are partnerships that result in the sustainable and ongoing generation of valuable and enduring results over time and well beyond the duration of the GDA.

Unless otherwise stated herein, all terms and conditions of the GDA APS No: APS-OAA-21-00001 apply.

I. BACKGROUND

The operational context in Mali remains extremely challenging. Chronic underdevelopment, a history of extreme poverty, insufficient infrastructure, continued instability in northern and central regions, and the absence of accessible financial products impair agricultural productivity and private sector development. However, opportunities exist to catalyze investments in key sectors to bring about much needed economic growth.

Recognizing the important role, the private sector plays in advancing a prosperous future in any country, USAID/Mali invites private sector entities to connect, collaborate, co-finance and co-create to achieve common goals and objectives. USAID/Mali’s core FTF objective is to benefit Malian farming families via increased agriculture-led growth; improved nutrition; and increased resilience among households and communities. Agriculture and pastoralism employ nearly 80 percent of the Malian workforce, and contribute to 40 percent of GDP.³ Through this Addendum to the GDA APS, USAID/Mali seeks to partner with private sector entities that will augment and support Malian agriculture via targeted FTF value chains including millet/sorghum, rice, horticulture, maize, oil seeds, agroforestry, and livestock.

Despite potential opportunities in the agricultural sector, limited access to finance and underdeveloped value chains hinder the productivity of markets and agriculture-led growth. Connecting producers and entrepreneurs to appropriate financing is a must to advance private sector growth in Mali. Private sector development relies on innovative financing solutions to catalyze investments for growth. High interest rates and high collateral requirements are some of the common obstacles in securing financing. The Malian economy can be resilient despite the many operational challenges; however, better access to finance is crucial to ignite economic growth.

³ UN Comtrade, International Trade Statistics (2016). Retrieved from <https://comtrade.un.org/data/>

COVID-19 Impact

COVID-19 has drawn more attention to Mali's development challenges. In April 2020, the Government of Mali (GoM) revised its 2021 economic growth projections from 5 to 0.9 percent.⁴ Other studies have shown negative projections for employment and food security that are linked to COVID-19.⁵ Commercial trade along the West Africa corridor was also impacted, as producers faced additional burdens to transport goods to market as a result of the pandemic.

The greatest challenge in assessing the real impact of COVID-19 in Malian livelihoods is considering the impact of the pandemic in the informal economy. Temporary job losses among the Malian diaspora also reduced remittances to Malian households. An April 2020 survey of the Food Security Cluster in Mali cited two-thirds of households as having observed a decrease in received remittances since the start of the pandemic. Remittances represented six percent of Mali's GDP in both 2018 and 2019. The World Bank estimates that remittances to sub-Saharan Africa will decline by more than six percent in 2021.⁶

Increased economic barriers faced by rural, marginalized populations, particularly women, further impaired economic productivity. A government-imposed lockdown shut-down business operations, schools, and non-essential services. These closures occurred in April-July 2020, a crucial period for the preparation of agricultural fields. The informal sector, particularly women entrepreneurs, suffered some of the greatest impact. A survey from UN Women estimates that 96% of Malian women entrepreneurs operating in the informal sector lost revenues in the months of March-April 2020.⁷ Post COVID-19 economic recovery will likely be the most challenging for vulnerable populations like conflict survivors, the rural poor, and women. This is due to these populations' participation in the informal economy, and because of the high levels of inequity and poverty that these populations experienced prior to the pandemic.

II. SOLICITATION

USAID/Mali seeks private sector partnerships to catalyze innovative market-based approaches that can advance USAID/Mali's FTF objectives in support of Malian farming families via sustainable, environmentally conscious, ethical, and inclusive development. USAID/Mali believes the private sector is a key driver for agriculture-led economic growth, including the creation of long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits that will result in a stronger and more prosperous country.

⁴ Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances Avril 2020, Note sur les Impacts du COVID-19 sur les Perspectives Macroéconomiques en 2020.

⁵ Mali, Impacts of COVID-19 on Production, Poverty and Food Systems, International Food Policy Research institute and Michigan State University <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/covid-19-changes-in-employment-income-and-food-security-in-mali>

⁶ COVID-19 Remittance FLOws to Shrink 14% by 2021 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/10/29/covid-19-remittance-flows-to-shrink-14-by-2021>

⁷ Impacts de la COVID-19 sur les Femmes Entrepreneures au Mali https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20africa/images/publications/2020/brief-covid19-femmes-entrepreneures_mali-juin2020_final_compressed.pdf?la=fr&vs=2807

USAID/Mali invites the private sector to contact us to discuss how we might work together to achieve the objectives discussed in this addendum. If those discussions identify prospective opportunities for fruitful collaboration, USAID/Mali will advise the private sector (and, if appropriate, their partner organizations) of their eligibility to submit a concept paper under this addendum. See Section IV of this addendum for further information and instructions.⁸

The Mission is open to all kinds of implementing models and as described in the GDA APS, “*the GDA model and GDA APS prioritize and focus on particular types of private sector entities as core partners.*”⁹ Consortiums composed of several private sector entities are welcome. Consortiums can be composed of local and/or international businesses.

In order for a collaboration to be a GDA and eligible for pursuit under the GDA APS, it must involve a core working relationship with one or more of the private sector entities listed below.¹⁰ The private sector leverage requirement under the GDA APS can only be met by entities from this same list.

Eligible private sector entities are limited to:

- Private for-profit, commercial entities such as a business, corporation, small or medium enterprise or private firm;¹¹
- Private foundations affiliated with for-profit, commercial entities;¹²
- For this Mali GDA APS addendum, private foundations affiliated with non-for-profit and/or philanthropic goals are also allowed;¹³
- Private equity or private financial institutions, including banks, micro finance institution, private investment firms, mutual funds, private equity funds and insurance companies;
- Private business or industry associations, including but not limited to chambers of commerce and related types of entities;¹⁴ or
- Cooperatives.

This GDA is open to private sector entities from any country, although Malian private sector entities are of particular interest.

III. EVALUATION CRITERIA OF CONCEPT NOTES

Proposed concept notes will be evaluated based on the general criteria set forth in the GDA APS in Section VI: Co-Creation under the GDA APS. As stated in APS No: APS-OAA-21-00001,

⁸ For purposes of this addendum, any concepts submitted must use the Concept Paper Template unless otherwise indicated by USAID/Mali.

⁹ See Section II.B of the GDA APS.

¹⁰ Under the GDA APS, individuals are not eligible as private sector; the private sector is limited to entities.

¹¹ Parastatals and government-owned companies do not qualify as private sector for purposes of meeting the private sector collaboration and leverage requirements under the GDA APS and this addendum.

¹² Examples: Coca-Cola Foundation; Gap Foundation; Mastercard Foundation; among many others.

¹³ Examples: Ford Foundation; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Skoll Foundation; among many others.

¹⁴ Such associations and entities must be private, and the members must be entities, not individuals. Quasi-governmental associations would not satisfy the private sector partner requirement.

USAID/Mali expects to receive GDA concepts that mobilize and leverage private sector resources at a level that at least equals and preferably significantly exceeds the level of resources requested from USAID/Mali. In addition, the following criteria will also be used:

1. Alignment with USAID/Mali's FTF development objectives: Concepts must demonstrate alignment with the [Mali Country plan under the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy, also known as Feed The Future](#).
2. Acceleration of Mali's agriculture-led economic growth: Concepts and ideas must present approaches that will contribute to Mali's agriculture-led growth. Concepts should employ market-based and market-driven approaches that increase agricultural productivity, increase incomes, and strengthen livelihoods.

In addition, concepts must identify which of the following specific Mali GDA APS addendum objectives will be achieved through the proposed alliance:

- (a) Foster inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led growth
 - (b) Catalyze agricultural investments that strengthen resilience among people and systems
 - (c) Improve productivity of agricultural market systems to promote a well-nourished population, especially among women and children
 - (d) Expand job opportunities and job skills training among priority populations in targeted geographies. (NB: this objective must be paired with at least one of the three above).
3. Target population: Any award(s) that result from this addendum must support activities that target and include one or more of the following populations: farming families, women and youth, and conflict survivors.
 4. Priority consideration: Concepts that advance the standardization of agricultural processes and system improvements such as seed policy reforms per USAID's GFSS policy matrix, as shown in Appendix I, will receive priority consideration.
 5. Sustainability Strategy: Concepts must present a clear sustainability strategy. Sustainability in this context is defined as *"the likelihood of long-term success of the GDA, which ultimately requires advancing private sector business growth and economic opportunities and/or corporate social responsibility, local ownerships, leveraging local resources and expertise, and increasing the ongoing achievement of significant and enduring development results over time."* As a resource, please see USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy.¹⁵
 6. Realistic Leverage requirement: Per the requirements of the GDA APS, concepts should include private sector leverage that **at least equals and preferably significantly exceeds** the level of funding requested from USAID. For purposes of this addendum, **at least 50 percent of the proposed private sector leverage should be in the form of cash**. In addition, all proposed private sector leverage (cash and in-kind) will be assessed and prioritized based on how it fosters greater outcomes and results under the proposed GDA.

¹⁵ USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf

The proposed leverage is expected to be reasonable, realistic and achievable. Applicants are required to submit letters of commitment from any entity that will be a source of private sector leverage. Appendix I of the GDA APS sets forth the private sector leverage requirement and the criteria used to determine whether or not a contribution is potentially eligible to count as private sector leverage. All prospective partners are advised to review that Appendix. Please note that even if a resource is eligible to be considered as private sector leverage, USAID retains the discretion to determine whether to count the proposed contributions toward the private sector leverage requirement.

7. **Innovation and technology:** Applicants are encouraged to consider how technology can be leveraged to deepen activity impact and scalability. For example, applicants can consider how activities can expand connectivity, use new or existing technologies, train marginalized communities in digital technology, and/or develop new economic opportunities through technology.

Targeted geography: The GFSS Mali Country plan identifies key zones of influence (ZOI) including the following regions of Mali: Sikasso, Bougouni, Koutiala, Mopti, Tombouctou, Douentza, and Bandiagara. For this Addendum, targeted geographies will be discussed with potential applicants prior to submitting Concept Papers. USAID/Mali has a special interest in establishing economic linkages between ZOIs and urban areas in the capital, Bamako. Special consideration will be given to innovative approaches that link ZOIs with established markets and/or trade corridors in support of agricultural-led economic growth. In addition, preference will be given to alliances that include private sector partners who demonstrate long term commitment to the targeted regions and a recognized business interest in the proposed concept.

Note: An invitation to submit a concept note does not constitute an award nor does it commit USAID to continue collaboration with the organization; USAID may choose not to request a full application even after an organization has submitted a concept note or participated in subsequent co-creation discussions.

Proposed alliances should be consistent with USAID legal and policy restrictions, including those set forth in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) and in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

IV. CONCEPT INSTRUCTIONS AND REVIEW PROCESS

Private sector entities interested in developing a GDA should contact USAID/Mali to discuss how we might work together to achieve the objectives discussed in the addendum. If a prospective applicant is not an eligible private sector entity as listed in Section II above, the prospective applicant must connect USAID to its private sector partners and await the outcome of the subsequent discussions between USAID and those private sector entities.

If the initial discussions between USAID and the private sector identify prospective opportunities for fruitful collaboration, USAID will advise the private sector (and, as appropriate, their partner organizations) of their eligibility to submit a concept paper under this addendum.

USAID/Mali will be responsible for the review process and management of any awards issued under this addendum. **Applicants are required to follow the concept submission instructions set forth in Section V of the GDA APS - “Instructions on Submitting a GDA Concept.”**

However, for purposes of this Addendum, all Applicants must use the Concept Paper Template provided in the GDA APS. USAID/Mali will not accept Expressions of Interest.

USAID/Mali’s co-creation process under this addendum to the GDA APS

- **Step 1 - Explore and Engage:** Private sector entities interested in working with USAID send an email to the USAID/Mali GDA Mali team at GDAMali@usaid.gov with copy to gda@usaid.gov to request a conversation to explore possible collaboration aimed at achieving the objectives of this addendum. Any requests for conversations with USAID/Mali under this addendum must be submitted from September 15, 2021, until December 3, 2021 at 5:00pm (GMT).
- **Step 2 - Submit a Concept Paper:** After conversations, the GDA USAID/Mali team sends an email to the potential applicant confirming the Step 1 discussions, and indicating whether USAID/Mali is willing to move forward with the process and entertain a Concept Paper submission. If USAID/Mali indicates a willingness to entertain and review a Concept Paper, the applicant must use the GDA Concept Paper Template. Concept Papers must be submitted by January 31, 2022, at 5:00pm (GMT) in order to be considered under this Addendum. Concept papers must be submitted to GDAMali@usaid.gov with copy to gda@usaid.gov.
- **Step 3 - USAID reviews Concept Paper:** Concepts will be reviewed on a rolling basis. However, USAID/Mali has until March 31, 2022, to provide a response to a Concept Paper received during the first tranche of the review period, and until November 30, 2022, to provide a response to any concepts received during the second tranche.
- **Step 4 - Partners continue co-creating the GDA:** After USAID/Mali reviews the Concept Paper, the GDA Mali team will send an email to the Applicant indicating whether USAID/Mali wishes to move forward in the process and continue co-creating and developing the GDA. An interest in continuing with the process is NOT a commitment to an award or even a request for a full application. Those determinations will be made after further co-creation efforts.

For purposes of this addendum, requests for the required preliminary conversations, as well as any questions related to this addendum, should be sent to GDAMali@usaid.gov with a copy to gda@usaid.gov.

Concept Papers and required supporting information must be sent to USAID/Mali at GDAMali@usaid.gov with a copy to gda@usaid.gov. Information provided in the Concept Paper must address the objectives and criteria presented above.

Timeline: The Mali GDA APS Addendum is open for a period of one (01) year: September 08, 2021 to September 07, 2022.

Concepts will be reviewed on a rolling basis in accordance with the submission and review schedule shown below:

	Concept Submission Due Date	USAID/Mali Review by
First Tranche Review	January 31, 2022	March 31, 2022
Second Tranche Review	September 02, 2022	November 30, 2022

The first tranche Concept Papers must be submitted by January 31, 2022, at 5:00pm (GMT) in order to be considered. However, regardless of when a Concept Paper is submitted, USAID has until November 30, 2022, to provide a response to the Concept Paper.

After review by USAID/Mali, applicants will receive instructions from USAID/Mali on whether to continue with co-creation under the GDA APS. Depending on what emerges from the continued co-creation, USAID/Mali may request a full application or proceed directly to award negotiations. Award Reporting Requirements. Reporting requirements for any awards made under this addendum will depend on the type of award made, and will follow USAID standard requirements.

Evaluation of Full Applications

Full applications will be evaluated based on the criteria below:

- Technical Approach
- Project Management and Institutional Capacity

Language:

For this specific Addendum, concepts may only be submitted in English under the GDA Concept Paper Template. If a Full Application is requested, the application and all other accompanying documentation must also be submitted in English.

V. QUESTIONS AND FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Questions regarding the substance and objectives of this addendum should be directed to the GDA Mali team at GDAMali@usaid.gov with a copy to gda@usaid.gov. USAID/Mali is interested in getting questions as soon as possible. USAID/Mali would prefer potential Applicants to submit their questions by November 15, 2021 at 5:00pm (GMT). While the Mission will certainly entertain and respond to questions throughout the process, past experience indicates that developing and submitting questions as early as possible in the process is of tremendous value to prospective partners and applicants.

Please note that frequently asked questions (FAQs) and/or select questions that reveal a need for clarification of matters in the addendum will be posted at grants.gov. The list of FAQs will be revised on an ongoing basis if and as needed. Prospective applicants should regularly check grants.gov for new questions that might get posted. USAID/Mali will not post all questions that are submitted; USAID/Mali will only post recurring or specific questions that USAID/Mali determines warrant posting to clarify matters under the addendum.

For additional information regarding guidelines and procedures to submit a concept paper, please refer to the GDA APS which can be found at the following website:

<https://www.usaid.gov/gda/global-development-alliance-annual-program>.

VI. RESOURCES

Public resources that might be helpful for potential Applicants:

- [USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy Executive Summary](#)
- [USAID's Digital Strategy](#)
- [USAID/Mali's Country Development Cooperation Strategy](#)
- [USAID/Mali's Global Food Security Strategy](#)
- [USAID Global Development Alliance website](#)
- [2020-2022 GDA APS Concept Paper Template](#)

Appendix I

USAID/Mali’s Global Food Security Strategy Policy Matrix

Policy Area	Policy Goals
Agricultural Inputs	Government of Mali (GOM) expresses a willingness to discuss methods to improve implementation of existing policies in the seed sector.
	GOM reviews and considers changes in legal, regulatory, and/or administrative frameworks that would allow private seed companies to produce and sell foundation seed.
	GOM expresses a willingness to consider adoption of additional regulations needed.
	GOM considers stronger enforcement of existing regulations for the quality control of agricultural inputs.
Agricultural Trade	A reduction in the number of informal checkpoints.
	Enabling greater citizen and private sector engagement in calling for reform.
Land and Natural Resources Tenure Rights and Policy	GOM demonstrates a willingness to empower local actors in irrigation management by building capacity of local water users in the management of irrigation infrastructure built by PNIP (Programme Nationale d'Irrigation de Proximité).
	GOM commits to institutional capacity building of the new Agence d'Aménagement de Terres et de Fourniture de l'Eau d'Irrigation (ATI) a new parastatal entity responsible for large- and small-scale irrigation projects.
Nutrition Policy	GOM considers updating Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan (MNAP)
	GOM further articulates and defines the roles and responsibilities at all levels in support of the goals under the National Nutrition Policy.